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TOWARD REUNION IN PHILOSOPHY

that all so-called a priori truths are analytic in this way. That such demands are not extravagant is demonstrated by the fact that anti-kantians who proposed to refute Kant accepted some such challenge. Surely they would have agreed that they could not claim to have *shown* in the manner proposed by Frege that all a priori truths are analytic unless they deduced them from statements which are analytic in some clear sense. And if such a challenge is not accepted, I know of no other way in which a philosopher might try to show that all a priori statements are analytic and still be discussing the question raised by his opponents. It is, of course, possible that the problem is itself badly stated and that we would do well to reformulate it so that these embarrassing questions cannot be asked. But such an illuminating change of the subject has not been produced either.

There are those who are willing to abandon as hopeless the effort to define 'analytic' as applied to all logical truth, but who nevertheless accept the innocuous characterization of a logical truth as one which is true and which contains only variables and logical constants essentially. This would characterize the truths of category I (spoken of in Section 5) in an acceptable way, but it would avoid the epistemological question "How do you know they're true?" rather than solve it. It would have the same philosophical standing as a corresponding definition of chemical truth would have, or as a corresponding definition of French truth would have. In the last case as in the others, we are less tempted to ask "How do you know it's French?" than we are to ask "How do you know it's true?" Even if one were satisfied with such an epistemologically neutral definition of logical truth, one would have difficulty in defining truths of category II, e.g., those comprising the nonmathematical part of category II, like 'Every vixen is a fox'. Such a truth is now called analytic because it is deducible from a logical truth by putting synonyms for synonyms. Granting that one has understood what a logical truth is, one must now understand what the operation of putting synonyms for synonyms is, and here we have a difficulty from which, one would suppose, there is no easy "escape" like that which the notion of logical truth provides in the case of category I. This is the area on which I should like to concentrate in the next chaper.

The Analytic and the Synthetic

1. *The analytic and the a priori*

In discussing the term 'analytic', we should constantly keep in mind the fact that one of its main functions *in philosophy* is to help solve the problem of a priori knowledge, for it is the key term in the statement 'All and only a priori true statements are analytic'. We shall begin by construing this as a *thesis* in philosophy, meaning one for which arguments may be given, just as arguments may be given for the related thesis 'All true mathematical statements can be deduced from logical truths'. It is only by construing it as an arguable thesis (at least at the beginning of our efforts) that we can understand why so many philosophers have tried to support it and why others have in good faith tried to produce counter-examples. The fact that opponents of the thesis try to produce counter-examples suggests that *they* do not think of the predicate 'is an a priori true statement' as *synonymous* with the predicate 'is an analytic statement', and to them it seems much more absurd that those who defend the thesis should maintain that it is analytic than that they should hold that it is true. In a curious way the very formulation of the issue can lead philosophers to use words whose meaning is at issue, for once we ask whether 'a priori' is *synonymous* with 'analytic' we might also be led to ask whether the statement 'All and only a priori true statements are analytic' is itself a priori and analytic. What this shows is the enormous temptation philosophers have to use *something like* the expressions 'a priori knowledge' and 'analytic statement'.

We learn the jargon from our teachers and go on using it compulsively. And even though the man in the street doesn't use it, some philosophers don't doubt that they can make it comprehensible to him merely by showing its connection with words that he *does* use. He understands the words 'look', 'smell', 'listen',

'touch', and 'taste', and so we first persuade him that the word 'experience' is connected with these words by pointing out that if we need to get to know something by looking or smelling or listening or touching or tasting, we need to get to know it by experience, and since these are commonly called sensory activities we qualify the word 'experience' by the word 'sensory' (not worrying too much about whether we thereby suggest that there might be another kind of experience). We then advise the common man (and therefore a part of ourselves) that a statement which is a posteriori true is one whose truth we must get to know by sensory experience. After *that*, what is more natural, even apart from whether we can find examples of it, than to introduce a predicate denoting statements whose truth we don't need to learn in this way, namely the predicate 'a priori'? The procedure merely requires us to accept as understandable a predicate which is the negate of one that we have already understood. We have begun by defining one sort of *getting -to-know* by reference to sensory experience, just as we might define one sort of biped by reference to the possession of feathers. And as the latter procedure makes it easy to construct the predicate 'non-feathered biped', so the predicate 'a posteriori' suggests 'non–a posteriori'. Thus we can persuade ourselves of the reasonableness of introducing the *predicate* 'a priori' even without knowing whether there are a priori statements. Think how much more plausible the procedure is made by actually producing statements traditionally cited as a priori.

We introduce the notion of analyticity by exploiting rudimentary semantics, whereas our conception of the a priori rests on the ordinary man's rudimentary epistemology. It is as easy to take off from the common man's use of the word 'meaning' as it is to take off from his use of the word 'see'. We persuade him without too much trouble that some words have the same meaning as others, e.g., 'vixen' as 'female fox', 'brother' as 'male sibling', and then call attention to a peculiarity of certain statements in which these pairs of synonyms appear, e.g., 'All vixens are female foxes' and 'All brothers are male siblings'; namely the fact that while they are true, our learning their truth requires no more than learning that certain words are synonymous, and does not require any sensory examination of the physical objects denoted by those words.

Let us suppose now that instruction in the use of 'a priori' was given on Monday and that instruction in the use of 'analytic' is given on Tuesday. On Wednesday we ask our common man, our bright child, or our student, 'Are all and only a priori statements analytic?' Now clearly he won't respond as some philosophers do by saying, 'Yes, because we *mean* by an a priori statement one which is analytic'. He has not yet been corrupted. Since both terms 'a priori' and 'analytic' are new to him, he can only rely on the explanations of them given by his instructor, and these surely don't warrant the conclusion that all and only a priori statements are analytic. He might be *tempted* to say this because he knows that an a priori truth is one which he can establish without sensory observation of physical objects, and because he knows that an analytic statement is one whose truth is established merely by examining the meanings of terms or by examining the terms. But at most this knowledge justifies him in saying that all analytic statements are a priori, and not in saying the converse.

2. *Platonism and positivism*

Here is where the advocate of the synthetic a priori has his big opportunity. Even if he admits that we can certify the truth of statements like 'Every cube has twelve edges' without looking at cubes, because we can examine instead the predicates 'cube' and 'has twelve edges' or their meanings, this is not the end of his story. What remains is his contention that the *relation* between (1) these meanings or (2) these terms is not always what the positivist supposes it to be, if we may so label the defender of the view that all and only a priori true statements are analytic. The anti-positivist, or defender of the view that there are synthetic a priori statements, may be a platonist or an anti-platonist, depending upon whether he regards meanings or linguistic expressions as fundamental. Platonism and positivism cut across each other to produce four possible positions.

(a) *Platonistic positivism*. A platonist who is a positivist says that our conviction that a statement is a priori is always based on the identity of meanings. Thus in the case of showing that 'Every vixen is a female fox' is analytic, he begins with the logical truth 'Every *P* is *P*', substitutes the word 'vixen' to get 'Every vixen is a

vixen', and then says that *the meaning which* 'vixen' *has is identical with the meaning which* 'female fox' *has,* thereby permitting him to derive 'Every vixen is a female fox' by methods that justify calling it analytic.

(b) *Platonistic anti-positivism.* A platonist who believes in the synthetic a priori may well accept the positivist's interpretation of *this* example, but will then point to illustrations like 'Every cube has twelve edges', *which he maintains is a priori,* and point out that it cannot be derived from logical truths in the manner of 'Every vixen is a female fox', just because we cannot produce a true statement of identity of meanings that will justify the counterpart to the last step in the other case. The situation here is best compared with that of 'Every vixen is a fox' (as opposed to 'Every vixen is a female fox'). Here we show analyticity (according to the platonist's view) by beginning with the logical truth 'Everything which is a *P* and a *Q*, is a *Q*', deriving by substitution 'Everything which is a female and is a fox, is a fox', saying that the meaning which 'is a vixen' has is identical with the meaning which 'is a female and is a fox' has, and concluding that we have derived 'Every vixen is a fox' by methods that justify calling it analytic. But a defender of the synthetic a priori who is a platonist will say of the case 'Every cube has twelve edges' and of others like it that they cannot be derived in this way merely because nothing like the above statement of identity of meanings is defensible in this case.

In the remaining two cases, (c) and (d), both parties—positivist and anti-positivist—are anti-platonists insofar as they both eschew reference to meanings and speak only of linguistic expressions being *synonymous.* Where the positivistic platonist says, 'The meaning which 'vixen' has is identical with the meaning which 'female fox' has', the positivistic anti-platonist (c) says austerely, ' 'Vixen' is synonymous with 'female fox' '. But (d) the anti-positivistic anti-platonist who defends the synthetic a priori has something to say even in metalinguistics. He *now* says that the positivist cannot produce the requisite true statement of *synonymy* in the case of 'Every cube has twelve edges'.

The fact that the opposition between positivist and anti-positivist breaks out in both cases suggests that the fundamental difficulty in the dispute is to be located not only in ontology but also in

what Quine has called ideology.[1] That is to say, even when we jump up to the metalinguistic level and talk about predicates being synonymous rather than about meanings being identical, we meet another philosophical problem, for those who disagree with us on the fundamental question 'Are all and only a priori statements analytic?' still have a way of communicating their difficulties.[2] The century or so of conflict between positivist and anti-positivist on this point is indicative not so much of the fact that clear words are being applied differently but rather of the obscurity which surrounds both the notion of identity of meanings and that of synonymy as between expressions. For this reason the thesis 'All and only a priori statements are analytic' *and* its contradictory are obscure, whether disputed by platonists or anti-platonists. It should be noted therefore that the doctrine of the synthetic a priori cannot profit by the criticism leveled against positivism on this point, for advocates of the synthetic a priori are just as dependent upon the phrases 'is identical with' as applied to meanings and 'is synonymous with' as applied to predicates as positivists are. It should also be noted that our use of the term 'a priori' is not necessarily affected by our critique of analyticity. What *is* affected are two conflicting theses in which the phrase 'a priori' appears. If the use of 'a priori' is to be criticized, it must be examined in its own right. A critique of analyticity may deprive us of one traditional method of *accounting* for a priori knowledge, so that we might be led either to accept this kind of knowledge as a brute fact, or to account for it in some other way, or perhaps to conclude that the predicate 'a priori' is also obscure. But we must not first identify the a priori and the analytic, then attack the analytic, and then conclude that the a priori has also been demolished. That would be the most flagrant use of the doctrine of guilt by association. The a priori is a separate matter.

3. *Analyticity and natural language*

The critical step on which we have focused is that from a statement like 'Every vixen is a vixen' to 'Every vixen is a female fox'.

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[1] *From A Logical Point of View,* p. 131.
[2] See my "Ontological Clarity and Semantic Obscurity," *Journal of Philosophy* (1951), 48:373-380.

It is a step in which we must preserve analyticity. For if 'Every vixen is a vixen' is analytic, then what we want to justify is the move whereby we deduce 'Every vixen is a female fox' and then say that it too is analytic. It is plain that certain other moves won't accomplish the trick. This is best illustrated in the case of the similar-appearing move from 'Every man is a man' to 'Every man is a featherless biped', where we know only that 'man' and 'featherless biped' have the same denotation. This move does not preserve analyticity and hence does not assure us of the analyticity of the statement derived in this way from 'Every man is a man'. What we are obliged to do, therefore, is to distinguish a move based on mere coextensiveness of predicates from one which will show the resulting statement analytic.

In the history of recent philosophy there have been many different efforts at defining the notion of analyticity, and we cannot examine all of them in documenting the contention that the approach by way of synonymy and identity of meanings is obscure, so we confine ourselves to a few outstanding ones. In confining ourselves to those which make essential use of expressions like 'synonymous' and 'is the same meaning as', we restrict ourselves to a view peculiar to one wing of analytic philosophy, namely, that which ascribes analyticity to sentences of ordinary language or unformalized science. This means, in effect, that we are not at the moment considering what might be called a conventionalistic approach to the problem, nor the views of those philosophers who hold that one should apply the word 'analytic' only to sentences in so-called artificial languages for which so-called rules have been constructed and stated explicitly. With *these* philosophers we will be concerned in the next chapter. In this chapter attention is given to those who (rightly in my opinion) recognize that the notion of analyticity was introduced in order to account for the a priori character of some statements in natural languages, or at any rate of statements that were not then parts of any constructed system or artificial language. Those who *refuse* to say whether sentences in ordinary language are analytic or not (possibly because they share our doubts about synonymy and identity of meanings), sometimes hold that the question of the analyticity of a statement must be transferred to an artificial language whose rules are given ex-

plicitly. This and kindred views are *not* under consideration in this chapter.

4. *The view that identity of meaning is more fundamental than synonymy*

The view that we establish the synonymy of expressions (and therefore analyticity) by going behind language, so to speak, or digging under it to meanings whose identity we must see, is closely related, as is evident, to the views of Russell and Frege, who advanced it in one form or another before the emergence of a more linguistic point of view. Most recently it has been defended elaborately and acutely by C. I. Lewis in his *Analysis of Knowledge and Valuation*, where it is explicitly contrasted with the view that linguistic considerations are more basic. What Lewis appears to hold is that expressions of meanings are synonymous because these meanings are related in a certain way, and what he opposes is the reversal of this picture—the tendency to say that the meanings are identical because the expressions are synonymous. According to views like those of Lewis and the early Russell, meanings are extralinguistic entities, and the fact that words which express or connote them are synonymous is dependent on objective relations between meanings, much as the coextensiveness of the words 'man' and 'featherless biped' is dependent on facts of nature. Just as one is inclined to say that the statement 'The Eiffel Tower is taller than Memorial Hall' is true *because* the Eiffel Tower *is* taller than Memorial Hall, and not inclined to say that the Eiffel Tower is taller than Memorial Hall because the statement that one is taller is true, so some philosophers are more inclined to say that two expressions are synonymous because the meanings they express are identical. But the difference in the two illustrations serves to bring out the difficulties in this platonistic approach to synonymy. Most of us are inclined to say that we know how to go about testing whether and convincing others that the Eiffel Tower *is* taller than Memorial Hall, while some of us find it extremely difficult to do the analogous thing in the case of meanings.

Furthermore, there is a relation between the synonymy-statement and the statement of identity of meanings which makes us uncomfortable about being informed that the first is true *because*

the second is true. The point is that even if there be meanings which are distinct from the words that connote them, it is difficult to see how useful the hypothesis that they exist is for the purpose at hand. For either (a) the relation which must hold between meanings in order to *ground* a statement of synonymy is so difficult to detect that anyone who has doubts about whether two expressions are synonymous will not be likely to have those doubts removed by an examination of meanings, or (b) asserting its existence will merely duplicate what is to be explained. So far as I know, there never has been a clear statement of what identity of meanings amounts to which could help the cause we are criticizing. I recognize, of course, that failure to define a term is not of itself sufficient to dismiss the term as obscure, but some undefined terms are more obscure than others.

At this point I can imagine someone arguing that in my very statement that the word is obscure or in my declaration 'I do not understand it clearly', I adopt a mode of speech which is as vulnerable by my own standards as I suppose the partisans of identity of meaning are by my standards. But such a dialectician would misconstrue the nature of my criticism. Of course, at some points in philosophical discussion I will say that I don't understand or that I don't find something clear because, as will be evident from later chapters, I refuse to resort to some "criterion" of significance which can be used as a club on others. But in criticizing the notion of identity of meanings I am not put in the same situation as those I am criticizing, just because I am not relying solely on what has been called the "no spikka Engleesh"–move. I assume that the task of philosophy is in part that of clarification and that a philosopher who directs us to examine meanings after we've shown some anxiety about whether two expressions are synonymous does not really help us.

It is worth a digression to point out that we are now considering a doctrine which we have met before, when it was supplied with an allegedly deductive proof, but this time its defense is not deductive. We assume that the advocates of meanings whose views are *now* under consideration *don't* maintain that the existence of meanings *follows* from the fact that some statements are a priori, or from the fact that we understand certain expressions, or from

the fact that certain expressions are synonymous. In this case, we assume, the defense is conducted much as a defense of the existence of molecules would be conducted, that is to say, by an argument which says that in postulating meanings we explain certain linguistic facts or phenomena which would otherwise go unexplained. Such philosophers do not hold that all we *mean* by saying that 'vixen' and 'female fox' are synonymous is that one expresses a meaning, the other expresses a meaning, these meanings are identical, and *therefore* meanings exist. What they begin with, it must be insisted, are certain epistemological *facts*, the fact that we sometimes understand linguistic expressions, that there is a priori knowledge, that we understand certain expressions in the same way; these are the epistemological data which are to be accounted for by the "hypothesis" that meanings exist and are related in certain ways. In order to concentrate on such a defense of meanings we must brush aside the *de*ductive defense and the view that 'There are meanings' is analytic. For they get in the way of a showdown with the strongest argument for meanings. If we meet *that* we will have been meeting the thesis on its strongest and most sensible ground, though it is ultimately indefensible.

By way of contrast let us recall some of the arguments for molecules as they are reported in *The Evolution of Physics* by Einstein and Infeld. One of the physical facts that the molecular theorist begins with is that of Brownian movements. Brown, a botanist, was working with grains of pollen, that is "particles or granules of unusually large size varying from one four-thousandth to about [one] five-thousandth of an inch in length". He reported that there was unceasing agitation of the granules when suspended in water and visible through the microscope. "How is this motion to be explained?" ask Einstein and Infeld.

"Looking at water through even our most powerful microscopes we cannot see molecules and their motion as pictured by the kinetic theory of matter. It must be concluded that if the theory of water as a congregation of particles is correct, the size of the particles must be beyond the limit of visibility of the best microscopes. Let us nevertheless stick to the theory and assume that it represents a consistent picture of reality. The Brownian particles

visible through a microscope are bombarded by the smaller ones composing the water itself. The Brownian movement exists if the bombarded particles are sufficiently small. It exists because this bombardment is not uniform from all sides and cannot be averaged out, owing to its irregular and haphazard character. The observed motion is thus the result of the unobservable one. The behavior of the big particles reflects in some way that of the molecules, constituting, so to speak, a magnification so high that it becomes visible through the microscope. The irregular and haphazard character of the path of the Brownian particles reflects a similar irregularity in the path of the smaller particles which constitute matter."[3]

Here the motion of one body is said to be explained or accounted for by referring to the motion of another one, and presumably this explanation cannot be ridiculed by reciting Molière. Why? Because we do not understand Molière's physician to say that the drug has within it an entity that produces sleep in the way that the water has within *it* entities (molecules) that produce the motion of grains of pollen. We feel therefore that when someone says that a drug has the dormitive virtue he is probably saying in a picturesque way that the drug usually or always puts people to sleep. For this reason, when we ask *why* the drug usually or always puts people to sleep, and are told that this is because it possesses the dormitive virtue, we laugh, as we do when we are told that the candidate lost the election because he didn't get enough votes. In spite of the difference between this example and that of the hypothesis that meanings and their relations explain or account for synonymy, a priori knowing, and understanding, they are also very much alike. To be told that you can understand a predicate *because* it has a meaning is useless precisely to the extent to which this explanation is different from the molecular explanation of Brownian movements and similar to that of Molière's physician. We want, of course, to account for the relation of synonymy, to test and to establish its presence, but we refuse to accept hypotheses which either repeat what is to be explained or introduce things for which there is no independent support.

[3] Albert Einstein and Leopold Infeld, *The Evolution of Physics* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1938), pp. 64–65.

It must be pointed out that advocates of the view we are criticizing do not suppose that these meanings are *images*. Frege goes to great pains to emphasize that. The platonic tradition is that they are neither mental nor physical. One is led to think, therefore, that they are entities which are introduced as explanatory in an *ad hoc* way. If the notions of understanding and a priori knowledge demand explanation, we can say that the theory of meanings is no clearer than the data which it is supposed to illuminate. It is sometimes said that scientists treat hypotheses about unobservable entities charitably even when they are not wholly satisfied with them, on the ground that some theory is better than no theory at all. But the theory of meanings does not seem to be defensible on these grounds precisely because of its otiose character. When we abandon it we do not feel that we are left incapable of predicting or explaining anything that could have been predicted or explained with its help.

There are those who would reply that this misconceives the aim of philosophical speculation and that we wrongly apply scientific standards to theories or theses that are not intended to solve the kind of problems to which such standards apply. But what *is* the purpose of ontology, then? Do philosophers suppose that they can defend the existence of entities like meanings in any other way? If they cannot, then we must realize that very often no account and no analysis is preferable to one that doesn't really advance our power to illuminate or explain. That is precisely the situation in which an epistemologist who appeals to meanings finds himself. He seems to be able to understand certain words; he seems to make statements whose truth can be established in an a priori way, but he can't provide an account of understanding or a priori knowledge which is clearer than they are to begin with. Under the circumstances, one is inclined to say what Newton once said under similar circumstances, "Hypotheses non fingo".

5. *The ascent to language*

We have up to now considered only the view that one must dig beneath the surface of language to meanings in order to get a satisfactory account of synonymy. The difficulties we have pointed out and others have led some philosophers to suppose that the

problem ought to be approached differently. As a result we have a tradition of approaching this question *without* moving to another realm of entities like that of meanings, a tradition that tries to clarify analyticity and synonymy even while it abandons the effort to establish and test statements of synonymy in an avowedly non-intensional way. Such a course not only involves an abandonment of the effort to examine the entities which are allegedly connoted by the synonymous terms, but also an abandonment of the need to examine entities denoted by the synonymous terms. A philosopher who takes this course not only gives up the effort to ground synonymy in meanings by saying with Newton, "Hypotheses non fingo", but adds with Laplace, "Je n'ai pas besoin de cette hypothèse", implying that some more suitable account is available or will be found. There are two variants of this approach that deserve examination.

(a) One may be described as the view that analytic statements are those whose denials are self-contradictory.[4] At first blush it appears to bypass not only meanings but also synonymy in its approach to analyticity. To discover whether a statement like 'All men are rational animals' is analytic, it says, we don't have to discover whether it is the result of putting synonyms for synonyms in a logical truth; we need only show that the contradictory of 'All men are rational animals' is self-contradictory. If it is, we can then conclude simultaneously that 'All men are rational animals' is analytic and that 'man' and 'rational animal' are synonymous. But *is* the denial of our allegedly analytic statement, namely, 'It is not the case that all men are rational animals', a *self*-contradiction? Certainly a purely syntactical approach to the notion of self-contradictoriness does not reveal a sentence resembling '*p* and not-*p*' in shape nor one resembling 'Some *P* is not *P*'. And even if we transform the allegedly self-contradictory statement into 'Some men are not rational animals', we do not get a self-contradiction in syntactical form. And if it is said that this last statement is seen to be self-contradictory once we remember the sense in which 'man' and 'rational animal' are being used, we must point out that this appeal to the *senses* (i.e., the connotations) of 'man' and 'rational

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[4] This entire section is a revised version of a passage in my "The Analytic and the Synthetic" in *John Dewey: Philosopher of Science and Freedom*, S. Hook, ed.; reprinted in Linsky, *Semantics and the Philosophy of Language*.

animal' and their relations is precisely what this criterion is pledged to avoid. It will not have bypassed "platonic intermediaries" if it doesn't. Will the proponent of this point of view then say that the statement is seen to be self-contradictory when we remember that 'man' and 'rational animal' are synonymous? But then he will not have bypassed synonymy, and his definition of 'analytic' will be none other than the following: An analytic statement is one whose contradictory is the result of putting synonyms for synonyms in a logical falsehood (a logical falsehood like 'Some men are not men' being the contradictory of a logical truth). Thus he will have gotten nowhere slowly, for instead of bypassing the notion of synonymy effectively he will have entered it surreptitiously, and far from having left the notions of analyticity and synonymy for the haven of self-contradictoriness, he will be right back where he started. So that, if we were thinking that we could avoid the dictum 'An analytic statement is the result of putting synonyms for synonyms in a logical truth' and the need to clarify 'synonym', we have been sorely disappointed; we have been led up the garden path, back to synonymy itself.

(b) *"If we were presented with something which wasn't a rational animal, we would not call it a man."* Such language is often used by philosophers who are anxious to clarify the notion of analyticity as applied to statements in ordinary language. In order to test its effectiveness in distinguishing analytic statements *with an eye on the thesis that all and only a priori true statements are analytic,* let us try it on the statement 'All men are featherless bipeds', which by hypothesis is not analytic. In doing so we shall also be trying it on the terms 'men' and 'featherless biped', which are by hypothesis not synonymous. How would those who use this criterion of analyticity and synonymy show that this statement is not analytic and that these terms are not synonymous, in spite of the fact that the statement is true and that the terms do have the same *denotation*?

Surely if we are presented with any one of the actual things that exist in the universe which we know is not a biped, we will not call it a man, and surely if we are presented with another which we know is not featherless, we will not call it a man either. We withhold the term 'man' from those things which we know to be either nonbipeds or nonfeatherless. It won't help to be told that

there *might be* a man who is not a featherless biped while there couldn't be a man who is not a rational animal, for this rests the nonsynonymy of 'man' and 'featherless biped' on the fact that "there is a possible but non-actual entity that does satisfy one but not the other predicate", as Nelson Goodman points out.[5] But to admit unactualized possibles is as antithetical to our present program as admitting meanings.

The fact that we *do* withhold the term 'man' from things of which the predicates 'nonfeatherless' and 'nonbiped' are true, as well as from those of which the predicates 'nonrational' and 'nonanimal' are true, is the most serious obstacle in the way of the kind of criterion we are considering. It focuses our attention on the critical statement 'We would not call it a man' or 'We would withhold the term 'man' ', and hence on the pattern of term-withholding that is supposed to underlie synonymy as opposed to that which is associated with a belief in mere coextensiveness of predicates.

Suppose we come to a tribe which has the following words in its vocabulary plus certain logical constants: 'man', 'rational', 'animal', 'featherless', and 'biped'. We are told in advance by anthropologists that 'man' is synonymous with 'rational animal' in that tribe's language, whereas 'featherless biped' is merely coextensive with it. We wish to check the report of the anthropologists that 'man' is synonymous with 'rational animal' in that tribe's language, whereas 'featherless biped' is merely coextensive with it. How do we go about it? In the spirit of the proposed criterion we must show that anything which was not called a rational animal would not be called a man by the people in question. So we show them coconuts, trees, automobiles, palm trees, and ask after each "Man?" We get no for an answer in all cases. They will not repute these things to be men. We must now show that there is a difference in their attitudes toward 'rational animal' and 'featherless biped' in relation to 'man'. We originally showed them things which were not rational animals. But these very things are not featherless bipeds either, and so the negative responses of the natives might just as well be offered as an argument for the synonymy of 'man' and 'featherless biped' as for the theory that 'man' is synonymous with 'rational animal'. It would appear that such crude behavior-

[5] "On Likeness of Meaning," *Analysis*, vol. 10 (1949); reprinted in a revised form in Linsky. See p. 68 of the latter.

ism will not avail. They don't call nonfeatherless bipeds men just as they don't call nonrational animals men. The criterion proposed will not allow us to draw the distinction as we wish to draw it, for one of the conditions put upon the proposed criterion is that it help us sharply distinguish between the coextensiveness and the synonymy of predicates, and it has failed this test.

6. *What has been shown and what hasn't*

We should be perfectly clear about what has been attempted and accomplished in this chapter, lest it be confused with things that cannot be defended or with still other things that must be defended on different grounds. We have considered the notion of analyticity as applied to sentences in ordinary language containing extra-logical predicates like the traditional 'man', 'rational animal', etc., in an effort to show that two kinds of approaches to the problem of synonymy and analyticity are defective. One appeals to extra-linguistic entities and their relations, another eschews such reference but is also defective. From this alone one cannot conclude that the notions of analyticity and synonymy are hopelessly obscure. But we must remember that the concept of analyticity is not always applied to ordinary sentences with a great deal of assurance, so that the failures of the "criteria" we have considered cannot be dismissed as we might dismiss a housewife's failure to define 'cockroach' or 'fly'. She uses these words quite confidently as matters stand now, and if she hesitated to call a fly a fly and then swat it, she might well be regarded as excessively anxious or excessively tender. But surely this is not the case with 'analytic' and 'synonymous' as used by some philosophers. Philosophers who exploit *these* words hunt much larger game. We have examined their weapons by methods which are not foreign to their own and our conclusion is somewhat negative. If one makes such criticisms, one can hardly go on to say with absolute confidence that *no* clarification of the notion of analyticity in a natural language is possible. But if a clear explanation is not forthcoming from those who defend the thesis 'All and only a priori statements are analytic', we may well conclude that the thesis is as vague as one of its key terms. And, as we have already seen, this should not give comfort to those who say that there is a *synthetic* a priori, for they are just as vulnerable as their opponents.